

UNIT 1: OUR WORLD

VIDEO: Meeting New People p. 9

Narrator: Here in Oyama, Japan, men are waiting to meet a partner. Many of these men work on farms in the countryside.

Fiorentini: The mayor is here. Parents are here. Eligible bachelors and bachelorettes are here.

Narrator: It's an important event for the town.

Host: (Japanese) We would like to welcome you all to Konkatsu in Oyama. We thank you for coming.

Mayor: (Japanese) I would like your help in improving the falling population problem we have.

Narrator: Cities across Japan are having events like this every year. The government wants more people to get married and have children. This is because the population is falling. With fewer people, the Japanese economy could face problems in the future.

Emma Osaka is 29 years old. She is from Tokyo. She traveled two hours today. She hopes to meet a man she likes.

Osaka: (Japanese) My grandparents are also farmers. They live in Kagoshima so I'm quite interested in it.

Narrator: Osaka and the man are learning about each other. They talk about where they live and the things they like. Osaka talks to the other men at the event, too. At the end of the hour-long event, she decides that she doesn't really like any of them.

Fiorentini: So, what's next for you, Osaka?

Osaka: Maybe start from close to where I live, like Tokyo, maybe.

Fiorentini: Well ...

Osaka: Yeah.

Fiorentini: Well, keep trying.

Osaka: Yeah.

UNIT 2: CAREER PATHS

VIDEO: Cave Scientist p. 29

Moseley: More people have been to the moon than some of the places that I've been to. I'm here to collect samples of calcite that were deposited in caves over thousands and thousands of years.

Narrator: Gina Moseley started caving for fun when she was just 13. Now she is a geologist and a cave scientist. She and her team are in Greenland to study the caves there. The caves are in places that are very difficult to reach. It takes three days of walking and hiking—often across dangerous ground.

By studying the rocks inside these caves, Moseley and her team can learn about past climate change in the region. They can learn how fast climate change happened in the past, and this will help us understand what might happen in the future. It's a challenging job, but it's one that Moseley loves.

Moseley: I really like the remoteness of caves. I like the journey that you go on, and even when you've been in a cave before, you still see new things every time you go in there.

So, have we got enough sample there?

The best part of my job is that I get to go and see these absolutely amazing places and produce something that is hopefully valuable to all of us in the future.

UNIT 3: ADVENTURE

VIDEO: Hooked on Adventure p. 49

Humphreys: My name's Alastair Humphreys, and for my entire adult life, I've been hooked on adventure. As soon as I graduated, I jumped on my bike and set off to cycle around the world. I didn't get home for over four years. I cycled 46,000 miles through 60 countries. And since I came home, I've rowed across the Atlantic Ocean, crossed deserts, looking for adventure, difficult challenges in the world's wild places.

Everyone loves adventure. People sit on the internet reading websites, watching films, thinking, "Oh, I'd love to do that, I'd love to do that!" There are so many things that stop people from rowing across oceans or walking across deserts. And perhaps the biggest one of those is the difficulty of starting, of beginning, of knowing how you even get going in a project as big and as daunting as that.

So I thought to myself, what if you make it easy? What if you make it so small, so short on your time, then really there's no excuse not to get started. What if you have a microadventure?

Walking around the M25 was my first microadventure. I loved it, and right then, I decided to commit to

a year in my country—in boring tiny small little Britain—seeking out adventure close to home, and try and show that you don't need to go to the Yukon or Mongolia to have an adventure. You don't need to live in the wild corners of the country to be able to have an adventure. You don't even need to be in your own country. I had to go to Hong Kong for a couple of days for some speaking work, and the first night, the company put me up in a very fancy hotel—there was a very nice fluffy white dressing gown. The second night, I had to pay myself, so I checked out of the hotel and went and slept on a hill. Slept on a hill looking over the lights of Hong Kong, and it was a brilliant experience, a real microadventure. The wilderness is closer than you think, it really is, and it was a great perspective on a different city.

So the concept of microadventures works wherever you happen to live. Get a bunch of friends, head out of town, and go climb a hill. Watch the sunset, sleep under the stars, and then when you wake up in the morning at sunrise, it's this amazing experience of thinking, "WOW! I've done something really different." A bit silly, it's less comfortable than your bed, but memorable, and different, and exciting, and adventurous.

And all that remains then is to run down the hill, jump in the river for a swim. Jumping in rivers is good for the soul, it's your morning wash, back on the train, and back at your desk by nine o'clock the next morning. And then, when your boss says to you, "Did you do anything nice last night?" You can say, "Yes. Actually, yes, I did. Last night, I had an adventure—a microadventure."

Life is now or never. Fill it with adventure. Squeeze it, wring out as much as you possibly can from it. Life is this moment, this is it, life, now. Tick-tock, tick-tock. This is our life. We need to make the most of it, to fill it full of rich, meaningful, rewarding, adventurous experiences. So will you? Will you go on a microadventure?

UNIT 4: THE VISUAL AGE

VIDEO: A Million "Likes" p. 69

Narrator: National Geographic is famous for the photographs that appear in its magazine. But with the rise of social media, many more people can see these images.

National Geographic's Instagram account has over 70 million followers—that's the one of most followed Instagram accounts in the world. The photos posted by National Geographic have been "liked" more than 3 billion times, and over 25 million comments have been posted by its followers. Here are five of National Geographic's most-liked Instagram images. Each one received over a million "likes."

Thirsty elephants take a drink in the early morning in Botswana. Photographer Frans Lanting explained that to take this photo, he had to wait in the darkness until dawn, with elephants moving all around him. The final image is a classic scene of wild Africa. As an evening storm lights up the sky near Wood River, Nebraska, thousands of cranes—tall, long-necked birds—arrive at the site. According to the photographer, Randy Olson, "That evening, there were more cranes than had ever been counted before—as many as 413,000."

A four-week-old leopard sits for a portrait taken by Joel Sartore as part of his Photo Ark project. Sartore has taken thousands of animal photos as part of the project. His hope is to raise awareness of endangered species and make us all think about how to save them. A North Atlantic right whale dives back down into the ocean. Photographer Brian Skerry has taken many photos of these amazing animals. Right whales are thought to be the world's most endangered whale species.

A female tiger rests with her cub in India's Bandhavgarh National Park. The photographer, Steve Winter, said that this was one of the moments in his career when he checked the back of his camera, and cried.

According to editor Daniel Stone, National Geographic's huge following on social media "allows us to share National Geographic's original mission—to explore the world and all that's in it—with more people, in more places, every day."

UNIT 5: RISK-TAKING

VIDEO: Freediving p. 89

Narrator: Alessia Zecchini is a freediver. She holds her breath for as long as possible while diving. Her goal is to swim deeper than any other woman. Most people can hold their breath for about a minute. But Zecchini isn't like most people. At 107 meters, she breaks the

record. She holds her breath for three and a half minutes.

But how does Zecchini do it? When we hold our breath, our oxygen levels go down. If our oxygen levels get too low, our body may not work properly. But when we are in water, our body tries to protect itself. It moves blood to more important parts of our body. It also slows our heart rate, so we use less oxygen. Zecchini also uses a monofin. It is wide and helps move a lot of water. This makes it easier to move. It also means she uses less oxygen.

Here's another risk-taker freediving. His flippers help him move in the water easily. But he probably won't beat Zecchini's record any time soon. Not everyone can freedive as well as Zecchini. This is because she started freediving when she was 13. It takes many years of training to be as good as Zecchini!

UNIT 6: SAVING THE WILD

VIDEO: Saving Lemurs p. 109

Smith: Lemurs are magnetic. Lemurs look at us with the same sort of brain, intelligence, and evolutionary history that we have. So when you meet a lemur, you're meeting a relative, and when you look into a lemur's eyes, you can tell that they're looking back. And the same things that you're thinking about them, they could be thinking about you.

Narrator: Chris Smith works at the Duke Lemur Center in North Carolina, U.S.A. In the wild, lemurs are only found on the island of Madagascar. The Duke Lemur Center has the world's largest group of lemurs in the world outside of Madagascar. Many species are critically endangered. The people at the center study and take care of lemurs to protect their population.

One of the most important jobs at the center is taking care of lemur babies. These are grey mouse lemurs. One female at the center just had three babies, and another female had two. It's an exciting time. To check that the lemur babies are healthy, the staff at the Lemur Center weighs them every day. If the babies gain weight, they are healthy and growing. The center needs to take care of the lemur babies very carefully during their first 30 days. The babies spend most of this time eating and sleeping.

Lemurs might be the world's most endangered group of mammals. For some species, there are only a few hundred animals left, and they are in great danger of becoming extinct.

Smith: These animals are our relatives, and we have the biggest impact on their extinction in the future, and we have the biggest chance to protect them, to make sure that lemurs do not become the first primates to become extinct in over 100 years.

UNIT 7: ANCIENT BUILDERS

VIDEO: Mysterious Moai p. 129

Narrator: On the island of Rapa Nui there are hundreds of large statues. Who built them? And why?

Rapa Nui, also called Easter Island, is in the Pacific Ocean. It is 3,700 kilometers west of Chile. People first came to the island over 1,000 years ago. Far away from the rest of the world, the Rapa Nui people developed their own culture.

The moai are the most famous example of their art. The moai are large heads made from volcanic rock. There are 1,043 moai all over the island. Many are about four meters high.

But how did the Rapa Nui people move these large statues? Some people believe that the Rapa Nui people used wood to roll them down the hill. However, some people think the moai were "walked" down the hill. The Rapa Nui people pulled the statues using two ropes tied to each side. Making and moving these statues was not easy. Nobody knows exactly why the Rapa Nui people made so many moai.

Many tourists visit Rapa Nui to see the moai. They also dive, surf, and enjoy the beaches. But Rapa Nui and the moai are in danger. Waves from the ocean are destroying the moai. If sea levels keep rising, visitors may not be able to enjoy these amazing statues in the future.

UNIT 8: ALIEN WORLDS

VIDEO: Exoplanets p. 149

Narrator: There are so many galaxies ... and so many worlds. What have we learned about them? And is there life on other planets?

Exoplanets are worlds that are outside our solar system. They are made of many of the same things as the planets in our solar system. Some, called Neptune-like planets, are mostly made of gases. They are about four times the size of Earth. Hot Jupiters are larger planets also mostly made of gases. They orbit close to their stars. This means their temperatures are very high. Another type of exoplanet is a super-Earth. It is larger than Earth. And it is made mostly of rock or ice. Finally, there are Earth analogs. These planets are almost the same size as Earth. They are also about the same distance from their home star.

For thousands of years, scientists said there could be worlds outside our solar system. But it was only in 1995 that they found one. By 2019, over 4,000 exoplanets were found. Some scientists believe that at least one exoplanet orbits each star in the Milky Way. If they are right, there could be about one trillion nearby exoplanets.

The search for exoplanets with life continues. To see if a planet may have life, astronomers look at three things—the size of the planet, what it is made of, and how close it is to its star. Studies have shown that some exoplanets—such as Kepler-22B—may have life. As technology continues to improve, who knows what we will find in the future?